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FULFILMENT OF PREDICTION IN ISAIAH,
CHAPS. 40-48.

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THE career of Cyrus, prophesied and now brought to pass by Jehovah, is one of the known facts upon which the prophet bases his appeal to Israel to trust Jehovah for the future.

In the effort to justify this position, it is important to consider at the outset the prophet's audience and theme. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." These opening words are justifiable on the ground of their fitness to arrest the attention. They are, however, more than a point of departure; they are a true text. The prophet has a message of comfort from Jehovah for Israel. By far the greater part of the nine chapters is formally, as also really, addressed to Israel; but there are a few paragraphs that are addressed in form to others, and the question naturally arises whether the section lacks unity in this respect. Does the prophet change his audience and, of course, to some extent his theme?

The first passage to be examined is 41:1-7. These verses are not addressed formally to Israel, and vs. 1 does expressly address the islands and peoples. We believe, however, that Israel is the prophet's real audience. It is noticeable that, after the first verse, foreign nations are not addressed, but, on the other hand, in vss. 5 ff. they are mentioned in the third person, precisely as in chap. 40. The dissimilarity between 41:5 ff. and 41:1, and the similarity between 41:5 ff. (and especially vs. 7) and 40:19, 20, are commonly taken as proof that 41:7 has by mistake been transferred to the present context from its original place in connection with 40:20. The formal dissimilarity being admitted, the first effort should be to discover a real continuity of thought which may justify the sequence. The suggestion of

identity of audience in chaps. 40 and 41 goes far toward a satisfactory explanation.

It is further to be noticed that the passage conveys to the reader the impression that Israel also is in the assembly which the prophet calls; whether as advocates for Jehovah, as the nations are for their gods, or as witnesses, as 43:9, 10, or as judges, it may be difficult to determine. Indeed, this very indeterminateness is evidence that the judgment scene was intended by the prophet, and was understood by the reader, to be merely a figure of speech for the more emphatic presentation of the theme to Israel. If it be remarked that the figure should be continued at least to the extent of summoning Israel also to the judgment scene, the reply is easy that, if chap. 41 is allowed to have any connection with chap. 40, Israel is already present in audience before Jehovah, and the cohortative "let us come near" may include Israel with Jehovah as one party, as it does the nations for the opposite party.

Again, the prophet is fairly chargeable with poor logic, if he is actually addressing the nations. Duhm says of vs. 4: "We can detect in these sentences the impression made upon Deutero-Isaiah by the events of history, especially the wondrous teleology of the Jahvist, and by the representations of an Isaiah and a Jeremiah of Jahve's unlimited direction of the history of the nations. For if he had not regarded the history and its philosophy, as he had it before him, as correct and universally acknowledged, he could not with such remarkable ingenuousness have treated as an argument that which must needs have been proven to the heathen. In fact, the peoples on the coasts of the Mediterranean who are summoned to the contest would much more readily have believed the proposition that Cyrus was called of Jahve than this other used in its support, viz., that they themselves were created and superintended by him. Auch Dtsjes. berührt den Boden nicht mit seinen Füßen." The criticism is well founded, if it is not permitted to look beyond these few verses to discover the prophet's real thought. As an argument directed to idolatrous nations, the verses 1-7 are doubtless defective. No one who really believed

in his idols would be led thereby to discard them or to accept Jehovah's claims; but the defects disappear if we are permitted to consider the "ground" upon which the prophet would fain get his feet to be, not the conviction and conversion of foreigners to Jehovah worship, but the comforting of Israelites who are already Jehovah worshipers, and the strengthening of their faith in their God (*cf.* 51:12-16).

A second passage very similar, so far as it concerns the persons addressed, is 41:21-29. It is similarly treated by Duhm, who holds it up to ridicule, himself personating, it would seem, the heathen of whom he says: "He would easily refute the prophet, if not laugh at him, for maintaining that there were no predictions outside of the religion of Israel; and that the Persian was called of the God of the little people that he had scarcely heard of, etc." It would also be in order to remark that the test, in order to carry weight, must be accepted and entered upon by the heathen, a condition which is not met in the passage. The argument, however, is not for the heathen, or for anyone likely to challenge the foundations of faith in Jehovah. It is for Israel, already fully convinced of the control exercised by their God in the affairs of the universe, and accustomed to regard prediction as a test of divine inspiration. If the prophet "receives the kingdom of God as a child" (Duhm), it is because he would proclaim it to children and must speak so as to be understood by them. His purpose is not now to tear down a false faith and substitute the true, but to strengthen a weak faith and make it of vital force in the conduct of the Israelites.

Vss. 8-20 of this chapter are commonly regarded as a digression, and such they are both as to purpose and as to audience, if vss. 1-7 and vss. 21-29 are addressed to the heathen. The inconsequence disappears if we may regard the whole chapter to be equally directed to the comforting of Israel, the different sections differing only in literary form. The relation between vss. 1-7 and vss. 8-20 is the same as that between the two clauses of Ps. 91:7. "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee." The prophet's assurance that Jehovah has

raised up Cyrus and is directing his career has led him to picture graphically the havoc which he has wrought in the world. He thereby magnifies the salvation which Jehovah has prepared for his people. But will not the confusion engulf the little nation with the rest? The fear is but natural, and it is fully met by vss. 8-20, in which the author directs attention to Israel's consciousness of its election and to Jehovah's protection thereby assured.

In the few verses, 43:9-12, there is an allusion to foreign nations which may properly be taken as of import similar to those in chap. 41. As there, the scene is in court; witnesses are present; an issue is to be decided. Here, however, the nations are indirectly summoned; the third person is used of them throughout, the second person being Israel. Israel is Jehovah's witness, to testify to his acts in the course of the nation's history by which he is proven to be God. But who are the judges? "That ye may know and believe me and understand that I am he." Witnesses and judges alike are Israel. Those to be convinced are the same who are to furnish the evidence. The scene resolves itself, then, into a dramatic appeal of the prophet to Israel's own consciousness of Jehovah's acts. Upon this recollection, which rises in the mind like so much testimony, he bases his assurance that "none can deliver out of the hand" of Jehovah; that he will work out irresistibly his gracious plans for salvation. Duhm would change the person of "that ye may know" to the third, because it must be the heathen who are to be convinced. This would introduce the same lack of sequence and unity of subject as is involved in the common view of chap. 41, and makes the prophet say precisely what Duhm has twice ridiculed him for saying in the earlier chapter. The gain by the change is a more natural course of thought within the limits of the four verses. The present reading furnishes a sequence, which, if not entirely logical, is at least psychologically possible and easily understood. This being the case, no change is called for, and the change suggested is not inspired by a keen appreciation of the prophet's course of thought.

A third passage in which non-Israelites are addressed is

45:1-7. Here Cyrus is the recipient of a message from Jehovah, who promises him unlimited prosperity in order that he may know that he has called him; for he has called him, and that for Israel's sake. He will support him, that the universality of his own power may be recognized in every quarter of the heavens. The section is a welcome expansion of the doctrine of election; welcome, that is, to the modern student of the Old Testament who now and then finds Old Testament apologetic a little irksome, but not welcome, as appears from 45:9-13, to the average Israelite of that day. The prophet must needs rebuke his people for their slowness in accepting their release from Cyrus' hand. The election of Cyrus, of which they were disposed to complain, was about to accomplish, and accomplish gloriously, the very things that their hearts were set upon, and of which their boldest conception perhaps was a reluctant release granted for a price and a reward to those able to purchase it, a release to be secured by no favor from an alien, but self-bought.

The insertion of the message to Cyrus in the prophetic writing was, of course, in order that it might have its natural effect upon Israel. Was it written for any other purpose? Did the prophet write it for Cyrus, or deliver it to him? We venture a negative answer; not only its introduction here, but the form of expression as well, and the whole notion of a message to Cyrus, are a device to get before Israel in dramatic and impressive form the fact of Jehovah's control and direction of Cyrus' career. This view leaves untouched as irrelevant the question of the actual relation of Jehovah to Cyrus, and the further question of the extent to which Cyrus recognized the part he was playing in the history of Israel. However specific Jehovah's direction, and however complete the response, it is not necessary to suppose that this particular prediction was the channel of communication between Jehovah and Cyrus. This interpretation is supported by several considerations. Vs. 4, "For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel my chosen, I have called thee by thy name, etc," would be of questionable value in an address actually made to Cyrus. The motive suggested would not naturally win the

heathen warrior to the service involved. The following verses (5 and 6) supply an ideal that might well inspire a conqueror, viz., the bringing of the whole world under the sway of one God, and he one who claimed, and for whom, when once his cult was world-wide, the claim could be successfully made, that he was the creator of the universe. In the grandeur of this prospect the, to him, mean origin of the God would be lost sight of. But the notion that the inspiration and ultimate purpose of the vast scheme were the resultant benefit to Israel would, if the human nature of Cyrus were to have any part in the case, come into the picture as a disturbing feature, counteracting the whole effect. In fact, by the introduction of vs. 4 the passage falls short of a consistent expansion of Judaism to a universal religion, for that verse is the expression of Jewish narrowness and exclusiveness. It is the antithesis of the old Abrahamic promise, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." If the prophet's audience is really Israel, the unnaturalness vanishes. True, the contradiction remains, but it is the easy contradiction of one whose aim is comfort and not logic. Even Christian consolation is often a strange mixture of benevolent and selfish considerations.

The quoted message beginning with the second verse is preceded by an introductory verse in which the clause, "Thus saith Jehovah to his anointed, to Cyrus," is followed by a series of clauses descriptive of Cyrus. These expressions introduce to the reader more fully the person to be addressed, in order to his better understanding of the message as it follows. Now, it is noticeable that these introductory phrases do not differ in content from the assurances given to Cyrus himself within the message. They are statements of Jehovah's support of him, of which the message assures Cyrus, and are not even confined to existing conditions, but expressly include his purposes for the future. The change to direct discourse is marked solely by the use of the second person: "To open the doors before *him*, and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before *thee* and make the rugged places plain." This failure to mark the point at which the quotation begins by some decided change of sentiment is

unimportant in case the address to Cyrus is a mere literary form, but is inexcusable otherwise.

What is true of the relation between 1 and 2 ff. is true also of the relation of the whole address to its context. The point of view is the same, the presuppositions are the same, there are no differences to correspond with the heathen and the Israelitish hearer.

The prophecy in chap. 47, directed against Babylon, is of the familiar type of prophetic denunciations of nations that have ill-treated God's people. These all may doubtless be taken, not as directly sent to the denounced tribe, but as of the nature of an "open letter," a rehearsal before the usual audience of the righteous judgment against the foe. In this particular case Jehovah is called "our redeemer" in a context which identifies the speaker as Jehovah. This lapse is natural only to the extent that Israel is prominent in the writer's thought.

From this review of the passages not formally addressed to Israel it would appear that the prophet is really addressing his own people throughout the section.

What was the message that the author brought to Israel? It was, of course, a message of comfort; and the particular comfort offered was without doubt release from the Babylonian captivity. This is the only event which will satisfy all the assurances of the section. Israel's service period is accomplished, her iniquity is pardoned, her God is coming, and that over a prepared highway, to rule his kingdom, to lead his flock and gently shepherd them. Such are the terms of the preface. The picture further presented is of Israel helped and upheld, her enemies confounded, herself become a threshing instrument, her thirst and hunger satisfied; Jehovah aroused to her help as a giant, gasping like a woman in travail; Israel redeemed, ransomed with a great price, and to be gathered from every point of the compass; Babylon to be brought low, Jerusalem to be inhabited, Cyrus to perform the service of Jehovah, Bel and Nebo helpless, salvation and glory to come to Zion, Israel bidden to flee from Babylon and from the Chaldeans. Surely the end of

the exile is meant, whether the writer be living in the exile or in the time of Isaiah.

Now, the prediction of a release is available for comfort just in the measure of the certainty of the fulfilment of the prediction. We accordingly find the prophet emphasizing the certainty of the future promised, by drawing attention to the character and past acts of Jehovah who makes the promises. First in order is, of course, the identification of the promising god with Jehovah. This is furnished abundantly by the oft-repeated formula, "I am Jehovah." There is frequent reference to Jehovah's creative work, and to his providential maintenance of his creation. Allusion is made to the election of Israel, to the founding of the nation, and to the various steps in its history up to the present. There is also abundant generalization from these facts, with statement of the general truths of Jehovah's relation to righteousness and evil in the world. The constant repetition of these sentiments with scant variety of phraseology constitutes the most obvious feature of these chapters. These thoughts are, however, far from being the prophet's goal. They are not inserted for their own sake, as the special message of Jehovah to his people through his prophet. Emphatic as they are, they but impart their emphasis to the main contention of the writer, viz., that it is this same omnipotent and righteous Jehovah who pledges his name and glory to the release from exile. That this is their value to the prophet is evident from a study of the section.

This use of the material is possible only on condition that the reader is familiar with the facts stated. Admitting as a major premise that a being who is omnipotent can predict and bring to pass, they must also know and concede that Jehovah has shown himself omnipotent before the conclusion will follow that this new promise of Jehovah's will be fulfilled. Studying the passages in question, we find that the argument of the prophecy follows this scheme. The prophet in no case attempts to prove that Jehovah created the world, that he marshals the stars; he simply states a fact known by every Israelite. There is nothing in the claim that Jehovah created the heavens and the earth which would compel assent to it. A heathen disposed to

dispute it would not be influenced by it in the least. It is forcible only as a reminder of an accepted tenet of Israelitish faith, from which article of faith the prophet desires to argue to a greater trust in Jehovah's promises. Back of this statement and others similar he does not go; he adduces no proof, for he expects no dissent at this point. His repeated inquiry is: "Have ye not known? Have ye not heard? Hath it not been told you from the beginning?"

One other evidence that Jehovah's promises will be fulfilled has been reserved for separate notice. We refer to his power already proven by predictions and their fulfilment. As above, the reasoning here is not to prove the supremacy of Jehovah. Only those who are already convinced of this would be inspired by the argument to confidence in Jehovah's predictions for the future. Moreover, in order to be available in an argument, the predictions themselves must be accepted as genuine and unique, and this condition confines the argument to Israelites who had their national literature at hand, who were students of their own history, who accepted the current prophetic view of history, and who, finally, were familiar with the teachings of their prophets.

The argument from prediction is found in six chapters. The first is the trial scene in 41:21-29, to which allusion has already been made. Assuming an Israelitish audience, and their unquestioned acceptance of the proposed test as conclusive, then the anticipated failure of the idols to cite past predictions and to make present predictions will, of course, show them powerless.

Chap. 42 begins with an inspiring description of the Servant and of the work that he or Israel (or he, *i. e.*, Israel) will with Jehovah's assistance be able to accomplish. Then occur the words (vss. 8, 9): "I am Jehovah, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise unto graven images. Behold the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them." What is the glory of which Jehovah is jealous? Is it not to be interpreted by the words following? If prediction has in the

preceding chapter been a test of divinity, then it certainly may be guarded zealously by Jehovah as a divine prerogative. After the false gods failed to predict or to show any other kind of activity, Jehovah uttered a glorious prediction. He glories in this sovereign activity, involving as it does conscious power to fulfil.

In 43:9 the assembled nations are challenged to declare such things as Jehovah has just declared; to cite past events predicted by them as coming events are just now predicted by Jehovah; to bring witnesses to establish the truth of their claims as they shall hear the questions at issue. These things, which cannot be proven for the idols, are verifiable for Jehovah by his witnesses, Israel, when once, through the appeals of the prophet, their blind eyes are opened and their deaf ears unstopped.

The argument in 44:6 ff. is clearly of this class, whatever be the exact reading of the original text, or the particular antiquity mentioned. The last five verses of the chapter are instructive. The prophet introduces a quotation of a message from Jehovah. The Revised Version fails to reproduce a difference of construction in the several clauses, which cannot be accidental. The subject is "I," with its appositive "Jehovah": there follows a series of participles, with no finite verbs to constitute the predicate. It is in some or all of these participles that the predicate of the sentence must be found. Now, as far as 26*a* they are used without the article, while from that point on the article introduces them. The last clause, introduced by *וְלֵאמֹר*, may be left out of account, as it certainly cannot of itself form the predicate. The natural explanation of the different uses of the article is that the first group of participles, without the article, belongs in the subject, while the later group, with the article, constitutes the predicate. The thought of the several clauses varies with the construction. Those which we assign to the subject rehearse, as we should expect, past and known acts of Jehovah, or state equally well-known and believed general truths concerning him. The clauses assigned to the predicate are confined to promises made for the future. The sentence then runs, in

effect, thus : "I, Jehovah, who make the universe and overthrow the wisdom of men counted wise, am the one who now says to Jerusalem, 'Be inhabited.'" The trust of the people in Jehovah for the fulfilment of his 'promises for Jerusalem is based on their recollection of his past dealings. Prominent among these recollections is that of his bringing the counsel of diviners to nought.

In 45:21 Jehovah again claims to be the one "who hath showed this from ancient time," that "hath declared it of old." It is this God who now swears, by himself, by an oath that is irrevocable, that every knee shall bow to him and every tongue shall swear.

The same connection of the future with past predictions appears in 46:8-13. Jehovah characterizes himself as one who declares the end from the beginning; in this there is no one like him. He bids Israel but remember the past and they will be persuaded. Turning then to the future, he bids them hearken to his promise of an approaching righteousness, a salvation that shall not tarry.

The last passage is chap. 48, in which occurs the fullest statement of the argument from prediction. Jehovah has a message from a certain class identified and described as follows: They belong to the house of Jacob, are called by the name of Israel, are come forth out of the waters (?) of Judah, swear by the name of Jehovah, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth and righteousness. They claim citizenship in the holy city, they stay themselves upon Israel's God, they are notoriously obstinate, stiff-necked, brazen-faced, inclined to idolatry, ready to attribute Jehovah's doings to their idols. They assume withal to know everything. To these men the message comes that things which are now accomplished facts had been predicted of Jehovah. Their accomplishment, on the other hand, was sudden and unexpected. The prediction was made in the presence of these same persons because of their obstinacy and brazen-facedness, in order that they should not attribute the acts to their idols. The predictions secured the general acknowledgment that the design was original with

Jehovah; the suddenness and unexpectedness of the accomplishment precluded interference with the execution of Jehovah's plans. It is exactly these two points which are guarded by modern patent laws. From the past he turns to the present. "I have showed thee new things from this time, even hidden things which thou hast not known." There can be no doubt about this, for they were not even created heretofore. The teaching of the chapter seems to be that prediction of a future event can be regarded as a divine function only provided the fulfilment is brought about by the power that predicts. At least some predictions and fulfilments are designed to be evidence of the divinity of Jehovah. As evidence, only those predicted events have value which are so outside the operation of other powers that they must be conceded to be wrought by the being who predicted them.

We have thus far seen that in the chapters under discussion the prophet uses the creative and providential acts of Jehovah, and especially his fulfilled predictions, as evidence to Israel of his supremacy, upon which in turn depends the certainty of the release which he promises. He employs these arguments upon Israel, who are already persuaded of the facts adduced, and trained by their religious leaders to recognize the conclusiveness of the proof. His object is not to convert the heathen, but to strengthen and purify Israel's faith. This being his purpose, it is clear that his use of *known* facts is not accidental, or a matter of indifference, but is an essential element in his argument. His purpose would not be served by an allusion in the course of his reasoning to anything not a matter of common knowledge, or at least easily verifiable. If, for example, to take an extreme case, there were no stars in the heavens, it would be vain for the prophet to exhort, "Lift up your eyes on high and see who hath created these," and then proceed to say, "The same Jehovah who created them is now predicting your release." Or if now and then a star was missing from the sky, would it be an assurance for the future that the same Jehovah who attempts to marshal the stars by number is undertaking the overthrow of Israel's enemies? Such a reference would be worse than useless.

It would not simply be a waste of words, but would also imply that Jehovah was lacking in power or constancy just to the extent that stars were lacking from the heavens. "Ye are my witnesses," Jehovah is represented as saying. They could witness only what was known to them, and should not be called to witness more, on pain of working injury to the cause of Jehovah.

The discussion thus far has not depended upon our critical position as to the date of second Isaiah. It has, indeed, been assumed that Cyrus is referred to, but that is the common belief of all schools. It certainly need not, in itself, stagger any belief in inspiration, for this may be defined in such a way as to include detailed prediction of events and persons as one of its results. The question would then turn on the probability of such a prediction in any given case. It has also been assumed that release from the Babylonian exile is the comfort which it is the prophet's mission to proclaim; but this in turn may be admitted without in consequence yielding the Isaianic authorship. An assumed situation just before the release will by very definition account for all allusions to events then past or present. While we hold that it is extremely improbable that prediction of release from Babylon would in the age of Isaiah take the form of chaps. 40 ff., and improbable also that the extended persistent and consistent assumption of a historical situation in the exile, exhibited in those chapters, would be adopted by a prophet, especially by an Isaiah so clearly shown by his undisputed writings and by history to be intensely practical in his prophetic activity, we yet pass over these considerations to state the argument for an exilic date from the fulfilment of prophecy and especially from the allusions to Cyrus.

Referring to the summary of the prophet's argument given above, it should be noted that Cyrus is one of the facts known to all concerned, which predicted and brought to pass by Jehovah prove his to be a universal power, and inspire confidence in the promises of a release now made. This will be evident from a brief review of the passages involved, some of which have already been examined in another connection.

The first, and an obvious, reference to Cyrus is in 41:1-7. As

has been seen, the prophet has been deriving comfort for his people from the creative activity of Jehovah, in which they believed, from the control exercised by him over the universe, in which they believed, and from the vanity of heathen gods, a thing that needed no intellectual proof to them; and now in 41, in the imagined audience of the peoples and Israel, and in the real presence of Israel, with the avowed purpose of bringing the whole question of Jehovah's supremacy to a final and practical decision, the prophet asks the question, "Who hath raised up one from the East?" and the description of the hero follows. In form this is not predictive, and the context forbids it to be such. It is one of the known facts upon which the argument for trust in Jehovah is based.

The context in 41:21 ff. is equally convincing. Jehovah challenges the idols to predict what shall happen and to show the nature and results of things that have happened. There is silence. A final and absurdly simple test, viz., that they do good or evil, elicits no response, and the inevitable verdict issues. But what of Jehovah? He has applied no test to the idols which he is unable to stand when applied to himself. He has raised up the eastern hero. Here is an event which is a fair object of prediction. "Who declared it from the beginning that we may know, etc.?" The answer demanded by the context is that Jehovah, and he alone, has predicted him. The sentence actually following runs: "To Zion behold a first and to Jerusalem a bringer of good tidings יְהוָה." If this be taken as referring to a past prediction, as is possible, the question finds a direct answer. If, as is more natural from the form of the sentence, it be made to refer to the future, the question lacks formal answer, although the context leaves no doubt as to what it must be. Assuming its reference to the future, it forms a logical continuation and termination of the demand of vss. 22, 23, that one who claims to be a god should be able to show the future. From the passage it appears not only that Cyrus was known to the readers, but also that he had been predicted, and the prediction as well as its fulfilment was a matter of common knowledge.

Cyrus is next heard of in 44:24 ff. It is Jehovah, the one who performs the deeds and shows the constancy and wisdom so familiar to Israel, who now says that Jerusalem and the cities of Judah shall be rebuilt, and that Cyrus is his servant to perform all his pleasure. The power, the wisdom, the inclination of Jehovah are certainly sufficient for the accomplishment of his purposes, as regards Jerusalem and Judah, through Cyrus. Cyrus is just as much a recognized fact as Jerusalem and the Judean cities. There is nothing uncertain about the existence of any of them. That which does engage the attention and test the faith of Israel is, with reference to Jerusalem, the prediction that it should be inhabited, and, with reference to Cyrus, that this foreigner and heathen should be used of Jehovah as his servant. This interpretation of the section is especially attractive if we may see in vss. 26-28 an allusion to recent predictions which had awakened unlimited interest, but had been in some quarters received with a pardonable skepticism. But even if such be not the reference, and the predictions of vss. 26-28 be now for the first time published, the prophet would still have abundant reason to introduce them by the sentiments of the preceding verses.

With reference to the forty-fifth chapter, it is difficult to see how the objections which are answered in vss. 9-13 to the agent employed of Jehovah to save his people should have been raised, even hypothetically, upon the basis of the meager data concerning him furnished by these references. If the man has already arisen, and his career already begun and become the talk of the community, then the chapter becomes most natural.

Chap. 46 contains a reference to Cyrus under the title, "ravenous bird." Bel and Nebo are unable to save themselves, much less succor their worshipers. Not so Jehovah; from the first he has carried his people, and he will carry them to the end. Let Israel bear this in mind; it is sure, for they have but to recall God's past predictions and fulfilments in order to remember how constant has been the execution of his counsel. "Calling a ravenous bird from the east, and the man of my counsel from a far country." This also is a fact which they should remember. Let them do this, and they will concede

the credibility of the promises of salvation made in vss. 3-7 and renewed in vs. 13.

From some of these passages the conclusion is irresistible, and with the rest it is in entire accord, that the career of Cyrus, already initiated, is used by the prophet as one evidence of God's sovereignty. It should be unnecessary to remark that the hypothesis of an exilic date for second Isaiah does not, in the least, modify any passage that clearly refers to the future. It is only those which, in form, are present or past in reference that are affected. The allusions to Cyrus, reviewed above, are not predictive; in the argument of the section they have the value of historical facts.

One question, however, remains. Can they constitute a part of an *assumed* historical situation? The question involves, of course, not the effect of the composition upon Israel at the end of the exile, but the relation of the message, if it existed, to the Israel of Isaiah's age, and onward down to the time when the assumed becomes the real situation. The general objection obtains here that an address or a document based upon, and predictions growing out of, a condition which is not yet actual lose force and meaning in the interval, because the audience does not understand them. Those passages are not to be classed here in which the speaker, having carried his audience along with him to a future point, points to a still more remote future. For example: "I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken; then shall Jehovah go forth and fight against those nations and destroy them." In such predictions there is an unbroken connection, link by link, with the hearers present. Destroy the first link, and the mind of the hearer does not run out along the chain to comprehend the subject presented, and the future fails to exercise any influence upon his actions or character.

A second objection, however, forces itself upon us in this particular instance. The peculiar use made of Cyrus' name and career (in part) is such that it is incredible that Isaiah should have thus expressed himself. It is not a mere question of speaking in an unknown tongue, however improbable that may

be in Isaiah's case. Listening to 40:1-11, Isaiah's hearers would say: "We do not understand you." If they claimed to understand, it would be a misunderstanding. As he proceeds to vss. 12-31, they would answer: "We accept your proof of the sovereignty of Jehovah, for we know your evidence is true." But when the dramatic chap. 42 is reached, the positive agreement and the passive lack of comprehension must give place to active denial. "Who hath raised up one? No one; no such person as you describe has been raised up by Jehovah or anyone else." And the argument that rests upon the acceptance of the statement not only loses all force, but speedily becomes, in naturally skeptical soil, an argument against, rather than for, the supremacy of Jehovah. Unless inspiration radically altered for the worse the prophet's logical faculties, and, moreover, operated on hearer and reader in a way the like of which does not continue, we cannot suppose Isaiah to have penned the allusions and constructed the arguments we have been reviewing.